

# **Lose Your Excuse Facts:**

## **Things you can do to help save energy at home**

### **Turn off lights**

Why should you turn off lights when you leave a room? Um, duh! Flipping a switch is probably the easiest way to start saving energy.

Did you know?

- Artificial lighting is responsible for about 15% of a home's electricity use. That means turning off the lights can definitely reduce your home's energy use—and your family's energy bill!
- Leaving a light on is just like throwing away energy.

Some types of bulbs are more efficient than others, but the most-energy efficient bulb of all is one that's turned off when not in use.

### **Use energy-saving light bulbs**

Standard incandescent light bulbs are a more efficient as heaters than they are as lights. They take a lot of energy to power.

Lights account for 15% of a home's energy usage. By replacing the standard bulbs in your house with Compact Florescent Lights (CFLs) – those twisty looking bulbs – your family could reduce the energy used by your lights by 50%-70%!

Did you know?

- Compact Florescent Lights (CFLs) may look a little funny, but they use 1/6th of the energy that a standard bulb uses while producing the same amount of light!

And even though they're more expensive, they last about 10 times longer than standard bulbs. So they're actually cheaper in the long run.

- Only about 10% or 15% of the electricity that incandescent light bulbs consume is used to make light! The rest is wasted as heat. That's why they get so hot when they're on.

### **Shut off computers**

Leaving your computer on 24/7 is a big energy suck. To save energy, turn off your monitor if you aren't coming back for 20 minutes—and shut down the main computer if you are going to be away for more than 2 hours.

Did you know?

- You can set your computer and monitor to shut off automatically through your operating system. There's usually a "stand-by" mode, which uses 70% less power than normal, and a "shut down" option that turns the computer fully off.

To save energy, you should set all computers in your home to shut down after a period of inactivity!

- A screensaver that shows any image on the screen doesn't save any energy at all, and may actually use MORE energy. You save energy only if the monitor goes dark by going to sleep
- The type of computer your family has can affect your energy use each month. Laptops use much less energy than desktop computers do.

### **Use smart power strips**

Even when home electronics are turned off, they consume a small amount of energy—and so can their transformers (the big boxes on their cords).

Some smart power strips can take charge and turn off extra electronics when they detect that a main unit, like a TV or computer, has been turned off. That makes them really good at saving energy.



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Did you know?

- The small amount of energy that electronics use when they are off can add up! It's estimated that 5% of electricity in the U.S. is wasted on products that are turned off.
- You can reduce the energy use of your electronics by plugging them into a power strip and then shutting off the power to the strip when you're not using them. That way, they won't suck power—or attract lemmings.

### **Turn off entertainment devices when not in use**

It's pretty simple: when electronics are on, they are using energy. So if you're not using an electronic device like a DVD player, game console, stereo, or TV, the best thing to do is grab the remote and shut it off.

Did you know?

- When you leave a game console on when you're not using it, it's like leaving as many as 3 60-watt light bulbs on. What a waste!
- It's easy to forget to turn off the TV when you leave the room. But leaving a big TV on when you're not watching it can waste as much as energy as 6 60-watt light bulbs!

### **Use natural lighting, heating, and cooling**

On average, heating and cooling a home accounts for almost half of its energy usage. That's why it makes sense to work with the power of the sun to help out your home's lighting, heating, and cooling systems!

Did you know?

- As any cat knows, sunlight warms up a room a lot! So, the key is to let the sunlight in when you want the warmth (like during the winter), and close blinds and drapes when you don't (like during hot summer months).

### **Unplug your phone charger**

Phone chargers and other power adapters continue to draw power even if they're not being used. It's called "phantom power" – and believe it or not, it adds up to 5% of our nation's power bill!

Did you know?

- Battery chargers can waste up to 20 times more energy than they actually use to charge something. Even when they're not charging anything at all!

Ever felt a phone charger and noticed it was really hot? That's the heat from all that wasted energy.

### **Talk to your parents about ENERGY STAR® appliances**

When your family is shopping for new appliances and electronics look for the ENERGY STAR® label. Products with the ENERGY STAR® label use less energy than conventional models—usually a LOT less. And that means that they can save your family a bunch of money in the long run.

Did you know?

- ENERGY STAR® clothes washers clean clothes using 50% less energy than standard washers – and a lot less water.

And ENERGY STAR® dryers spin clothes better to dry them in less time.

- The type of refrigerator you have has a lot to do with how much energy it uses. The ones with a freezer on the top use less energy than the ones with the freezer on the side.



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But whichever type your family chooses, making sure it has an ENERGY STAR® label means it'll use 15% less energy than required by government standards.

- ENERGY STAR® dishwashers use less water and 25% less energy than required by government standards.

### **Talk to your parents about programmable digital thermostats**

Most programmable digital thermostats can help save energy by automatically turning the thermostat back at night or when your family is not at home.

Did you know?

- Your family can save around 10% a year on your heating bills by simply turning your thermostat back 10°–15° for eight hours.

And during the summer, you can save on cooling by keeping your house warmer than usual while you're away.

- Programmable digital thermostats are a little more expensive than regular thermostats, but when set properly they can save your family over \$180 a year on average!

### **Talk to your parents about home improvements**

Talk to your parents about things you can do to make your house waste less energy. Your family can cut your energy use for heating and cooling from 20% to 50%. How? By sealing air leaks, using proper insulation, adjusting your thermostats settings, and making sure the equipment that heats your home's air and water is in good shape (upgrade them if they're too old!).

Did you know?

- Air sneaks into homes from every nook and cranny.

But by sealing air leaks and using proper insulation, your family can cut your home's energy use by up to 10%.

- If your home was built before 1980, chances are it needs more insulation!



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